TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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No. 63
September, 1950

Town and Country Church Architecture

E. DARGAN BUTT

• Usually when a small congregation comes to the point where it is able to build a new structure there is a great deal of enthusiasm and impatience to get things started at once. This often results in confusion with the result that the new church instead of being a source of inspiration and joy is one of disappointment and regret.

When a small consecrated congregation has made great sacrifices in order to erect a building, it is disappointing to find after all is finished that the church lacks a worshipful atmosphere, the parish hall is inadequate for needs, or the parsonage is inconveniently arranged. In order to protect the small congregation from such an experience, there are several things which may be considered.

In the first place, a small church or other structure can be beautiful and efficient even though unpretentious or expensive, but expert knowledge is needed to achieve that goal. In most denominations there is a commission on architecture. This commission should be consulted whenever possible, and its advice should be given serious consideration. If there is no denominational commission, the Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture, at 300 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., is available to all.

Needs and Resources

In planning a new church several things should be borne in mind. The church in town or country should be architecturally right for its surroundings and have convenient facilities for its special needs and functions. It must be, above all, a place for worship. Its atmosphere, however simple, must induce reverence and devotion. It must have adequate space for classes of religious education and fellowship needs. It must be planned so that expenses for maintenance and repairs will not exceed available resources.

Heating is another major consideration. A Gothic ceiling may be beautiful but not adapted to the heating needs of the small church. There is a compromise where beauty and efficiency can be combined.

The location of a country church should be carefully considered. It should be easily accessible. The ground should be high on well-drained, good soil, with enough space around the church for out-of-door services and recreational activities.

In some cases a small, poor congregation must turn down an offer for free but poorly located or conditioned ground and go to the expense of purchasing land in a better location, thinking of the long-range program of the congregation.

Remodeling

Expert advice should be sought when remodeling, as well as when building a new structure. Alterations have been made in many country churches which have made them much more convenient and functional. This, however, is not a task for a group of people without special knowledge, and congregations considering the remodeling of their churches should seek expert advice.

Where a small church congregation cannot rebuild or spend much money on remodeling it can, in many cases, adapt its present structure to the various needs of the congregation by simple rearrangements. However, a real effort should always be made to protect the sanctuary from any loss of its place at the center of things or to take from it its particular function. If the church building must be used for other functions the sanctuary should be separated by a screen or other partition. A reversible pew is now being made which enables the congregation to face a platform in the rear of the church for general meetings.

Regarding small organs for small churches, it is my opinion that a small pipe organ is preferable to a mechanical organ. The question of upkeep and tuning, however, has to be considered. If a small pipe organ

cannot be obtained or maintained, probably the next choice is a good powered reed organ.

Plans for The National Council

• Leaders of more than 27,000,000 American Christians have announced plans for an historic convention when twenty-one Protestant and four Eastern Orthodox church bodies will merge their seven interdenominational service agencies into one instrument of cooperative effort—the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The convention, to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, November 28-December 1, will constitute the largest conclave of major Protestant and Eastern Orthodox denominations in this generation, exceeding the initial meeting of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948.

The eight interdenominational agencies, now independent bodies, which will combine into a single instrument for service are: The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America; Home Missions Council of North America; International Council of Religious Education; Missionary Education Movement of the U.S. and Canada; National Protestant Council on Higher Education; United Council of Church Women; United Stewardship Council; and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America.

The twenty-five church bodies with a membership of 27,698,996 that will become members of the National Council are: Methodist Church; United Lutheran Church; Presbyterian U.S.A.; Protestant Episcopal Church; Northern Baptist Convention; Disciples of Christ; Congregational Christian Church; Reformed Church in America; Presbyterian U.S.; Evangelical and Reformed Church; United Presbyterian Church; Church of the Brethren; Evangelical United Brethren; National Baptist Convention; Seventh Day Baptist Church; Moravian Church; Friends—Five Year Meeting; Friends— Philadelphia; Roumanian Orthodox Church; Ukrainian Orthodox Church; Russian Orthodox Church; African Methodist Episcopal Church; African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Colored Methodist Episcopal Church; Syrian Orthodox Church.

Those wishing to attend this constituting convention should ask their state councils of churches for information.

Training for Country Pastors

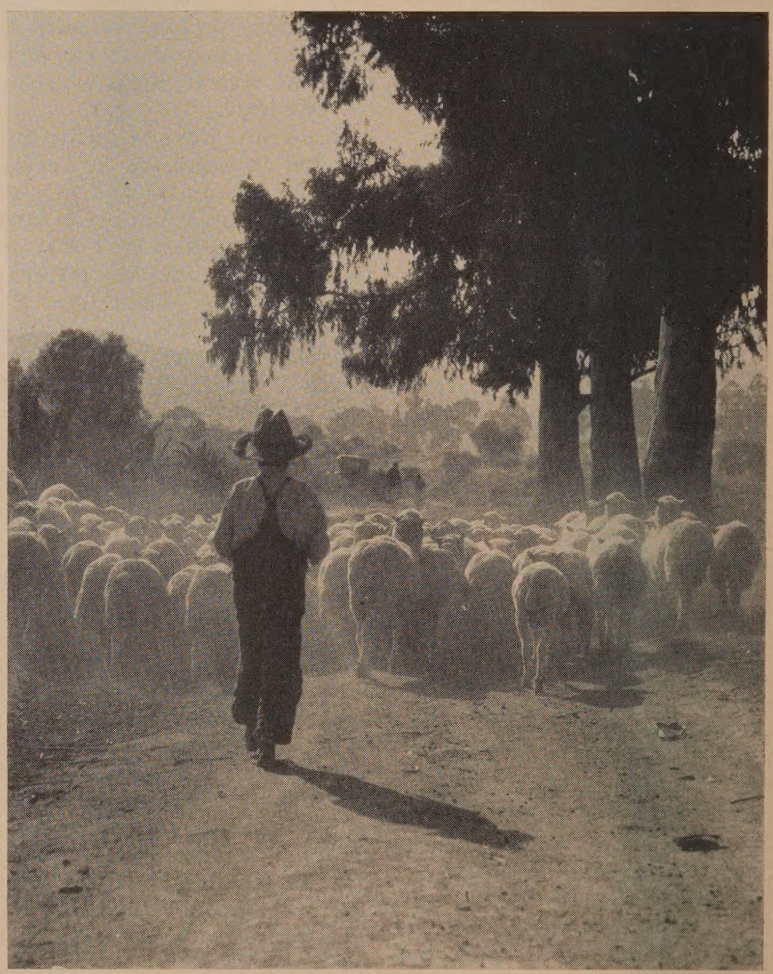
• The Church of England, believing that the parish priest is the key man in countryside evangelism and that training for this work is urgently needed, advocates "the rural deanery" where a working fellowship of priests can meet for a four or five days' retreat and visit two by two in parishes other than their own.

Rural South

• A report of a recent survey of Negro families and Negro churches in the rural south has been prepared by Ralph A. Felton. It is entitled, *These My Brethren.*

This bulletin of 102 pages and 13 chapters contains statistical findings regarding types of homes in which Negroes live, their farms, social organizations, churches, and occupations. The last chapter lists evidences of improvement in the rural south and challenging suggestions for future endeavor.

These My Brethren may be procured from the Rural Church Department, Drew Seminary, Madison, New Jersey. The price is 40c per copy; 100 copies, $30.00.



Photograph by H. Armstrong Roberts, Philadelphia, Pa.

Quaker Farmers and Others in Seminar

(Nineteen Friends Yearly Meetings and twenty-five Monthly Meetings were represented in the Agricultural Seminar held in Washington, D. C., under the sponsorship of the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the American Friends Service Committee.)

• For ten full working days these farmers and others vitally interested in farm problems conferred with members of the Department of Agriculture, the World Food and Agriculture Organization, the State Department, Congress, and officials of the national farm organizations, on short-range and long-range problems of American agriculture as they are related to world food needs.

In sending out the call for the seminar, E. Raymond Wilson, executive secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, had written: "The World Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that about two-thirds of the human race is undernourished or mal-nourished. And yet as I travel around, I keep hearing about potatoes dumped in swamps or destroyed, eggs sold for tankage and fertilizer. . . ." This shocking paradox of American food surpluses in a hungry world was the focus of the ten days' deliberations, and a religious concern for our responsibilities in this situation dominated the thinking of the group.

Give Generously

"There is no surplus of food from the viewpoint of the world as a whole," says a statement issued at the close of the seminar. "Millions of people in many countries, including our own, are miserably undernourished while 'surplus' farm products rot in storage. We believe that we of the United States must give away the food that we can't eat and can't sell—give it away quickly and give it away generously.

"We believe that we must think in terms of the world in setting up our agricultural policies. What all peoples need is that an economy of abundance be developed together with international planning for effective distribution.

"We believe we must drastically curtail our budgeting for war, and spend some real money on peace—through the United Nations, the World Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, and similar international agencies. We urge the removal of the ceiling from United States contributions to the World Food and Agriculture Organization, and dynamic United States leadership in utilizing that agency for the creative purpose for which it was designed.

Religious Challenge

"We believe that the program the United States should now be adopting is something like that proposed by Senator McMahon, to put our best brains, best energy, best personnel, and largest appropriations into an effort to help every part of the world utilize its own resources.

"We believe that this is the great religious challenge of our times, and we appeal not only to our Government but also to individual citizens, that we now show ourselves willing to use our resources for peace as freely and generously as we were willing to use them in World War II for destruction."

While there were differences of opinion on details of desirable agricultural policy, there was deep unanimity as to desirable over-all principles and policies, and a number of specific suggestions received general approval.

International Scope

On the international scene, in supporting food and fiber gifts to countries unable to pay in dollars, particularly to parts of Asia not benefiting from the Economic Cooperation Administration, the group was keenly interested in the possibility of counterpart funds to be set aside by countries receiving these gifts, the funds to be applied to developing the agricultural and industrial resources of those countries. Vastly enlarged programs of technical assistance throughout the world were warmly supported, with the additional concern that persons participating in these programs be carefully selected, not only for their professional qualifications but also for their capacity to enter into cultures different from our own with creative imaginations and resourcefulness.

At Home

On the domestic scene, it was recommended that more of the food surpluses be utilized in an expanded school-lunch program, and that relief and philanthropic agencies also receive a generous share. The use of flexible price supports at intermediate levels was approved to the extent that they are deemed necessary for the general welfare.

There was realization that the United States must accept more imports if the present imbalance of exports over imports is to be corrected, and that part of these additional imports must be agricultural. In the short view, this might not be altogether agreeable to farmers. This was not overlooked in the statement. "Selfishness and greed are stubborn barriers to peace and brotherhood," it reads, " and we as farmers must be willing to do our share.

"We have been brought to a profound recognition that we are part of a world community under God. Far beyond any merits of our own, we enjoy privileges in a land of increasing plenty. We recognize the responsibilities of our stewardship in the midst of this abundance. In deep humility we will strive to accept our responsibilities, to give of ourselves and our substance personally as well as to urge our nation to share as a nation.

"We leave this seminar with a broadened concept of our duties of Christian citizenship. Our hearts go out to our brother man, wherever he is. We desire to join with him in building a world of love, not of hate; of sharing, not of taking; of peace, not of war."

A detailed report of the findings of the seminar will be issued as soon as it can be prepared. This may be secured at nominal cost by writing to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, 1000 11th Street, N.W., Washington 1, D. C.

—Reprinted from *The American Friend* by permission

Grapes of Wrath are Stored Again

• Wretched "Grapes of Wrath" conditions besetting migrant farm workers in Arizona and California are being duplicated in other farm sections of the country, according to Miss Edith Lowry, executive secretary of the Home Missions Council of North America.

Firsthand field reports received by the Council's staff of missionaries and social workers reveal that the plight of migrants in the South and Texas are "as bad in many cases as those reported by the press in California," Miss Lowry said. Many of the reports from Florida, for example, described how workers traveled eighty miles in search of work, some returning home with less than thirty cents in their pockets.

Pointing out that unemployment in the country now stands at approximately 5,500,000, Miss Lowry warned that the migrant labor market is becoming "dangerously overcrowded." She also predicted that with the number of migrants now close to 2,500,000 the "burden on the states to provide relief and other assistance measures will be increased correspondingly."

Ellis Marshburn, an ordained Presbyterian minister, and now Midwest Migrant Supervisor of the Home Missions Council, has written about these "Displaced Persons of America" in a recent issue of *The Mennonite Community*, published at Scottdale, Pa. Mr. Marshburn says that "few become migrant from choice. Usually it is the last resort of the desperate."

The needs of migrants are many and complex. No one program could meet each migrant situation. To meet these varied needs, the Home Missions Council urges churches, specialized agencies and communities to lead the way in welcoming migrants to new areas, making community health and educational facilities available to them, tracking down "tide-over" jobs, and doing everything possible to guard against a recurrence of last winter's migrant disaster.

The American Medical Association's Conference on Rural Health

• The Fifth National Conference on Rural Health was held in Kansas City on February 3-4, 1950. One of the outstanding features of the program was division into small groups. Each group made a rather intensive study of its own subject so that the reports pointed up the best thinking of all present.

Dr. Lewis Webster Jones, President of the University of Arkansas, gave a stimulating message the opening morning in which he emphasized the responsibility of Land Grant Colleges to understand the problems of rural health and to do all they can to help the situation. He said, "We must get down to the grass roots and stimulate community responsibility and community leadership. . . . Up to now it has been easier to organize people to combat the diseases of cotton . . . but children are the most valuable crop we raise. . . . There is a gap between what we know needs to be done and what we do. We must narrow the gap. The Land Grant Colleges," he said, "are the greatest democratic invention in education . . . to equip ordinary people to live better."

Firsthand Experience

Dr. Franklin D. Murphy, Dean of the University of the Kansas School of Medicine, spoke of the changing aspect of life in rural areas now that we have rural electrification and increased transportation. He outlined a plan whereby each medical student has eleven weeks' placement with a general practitioner in a town of 2500 or less. Here the interne will get firsthand experience in the small town. Moreover, and this is equally important, his wife will be able to experience life in the small town "which is often more satisfying than in the large city."

The group studying the Relation of the Agricultural Extension Services to rural health came to the following conclusions:

Home demonstration and extension clubs should know more about crippled children's programs; cancer clinics and similar programs. The County Agents and Home Demonstration Agents have a good opportunity to encourage the organization of Health Councils; to explain such services as immunization and free TB examinations; to teach good practices in nutrition; "to inoculate the people with good ideas."

All of the foregoing are departments wherein a word of encouragement and understanding from the rural clergyman may be of immeasurable significance.

Financial Adjustment Needed

In the discussion of Rural Medical Facilities at the Local Level, the major emphasis was placed on the possibilities of the out-patient clinic. For the most part they have been serving the indigent or near-indigent, with no provision for the part-pay patients—and rural people do not like to be classed as welfare patients. Where there is no hospital in the area these clinics may be attached to a hospital some distance away. They should contain at least first-aid facilities with the doors always remaining open.

It was pointed out that the doctor who serves several points cannot afford to pay an office fee in each place.

To initiate such a program there must be a missionary-minded doctor at work, or the program has failed. Leadership in financing must come from the community itself, even though there is need for subsidy. And in working out the program someone from a locality where it has really worked can be of immeasurable assistance in planning.

Vespers

Cedar towered ridge
Near the covered bridge.
Young calf in meadow
Darting near hedgerow.
The cardinal shrill—
Complete evening thrill.

—*Rusticus*

Town & Country Church

Published monthly (except June, July, August) by the Committee on Town and Country, Home Missions Council of N.A., the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and the International Council of Religious Education.

15c a copy; One Dollar a Year

Publication Office: Tenth and Scull Streets, Lebanon, Pa.

Editorial Office: 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Lebanon, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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What a Country Clergyman Did in His Spare Time
Gilbert White, 1720-1793

WILLIAM L. BAILEY

• *The Natural History of Selborne* has been oftener printed than any other work on natural history. It ranks with Izaak Walton's *The Complete Angler* in accuracy and charm. Darwin regarded it as having given the inspiration to his own work.

It is the work of a country minister who was born, lived, and died within the limits of a country parish. Gilbert White was in a way a recluse. For long he was only the obscure vicar of Selborne. Then his letters discovered him to the world and have given him an honored place in the history of modern science. His genius and career are strikingly like that of Henri Fabre. His work has the accuracy of a Fabre or a Darwin and the literary charm of a Maeterlinck. A minister and the son of a minister, he made science serve his God.

One of his biographers saw in his life "a most valuable record and example of how the leisure hours of a country clergyman may be employed." For *The Natural History of Selborne* is nothing but the correspondence of a country clergyman. Let any one consult his own letter files, and stand in the judgment with Gilbert White.

White was not given to writing of himself or his personal affairs. As he himself said, "the beneficence of the Creator as exemplified in His works are a more proper matter for communication." These letters are such as any country minister *might* write. They are the simple recording of valuable facts, as they were really seen or learned, without embellishment except as received from truth, and without allowing the imagination to ramble and assume conclusions the exactness of which it had not proved. White had the scientific spirit to a degree which amounted to reverence and even worship. "The wisdom of God in Creation" is a very frequent phrase in his letters. No one whose life is on record has perhaps more fully obeyed the command of the Master to "consider" Nature and Nature's God.

At the height of his fame, biographers, relatives, and Oriel College (of which he was for fifty years a Fellow) sought a picture of him—in vain. He could several times have taken excellent College positions but he chose to remain in his village. White had realized as do few country ministers the opportunity his local situation afforded for the mind. Selborne was a peculiarly happy situation for the work he found it possible to do there. Yet it has been the spirit of this man that made great good come out of it. The place and the man cannot be divorced. "Gilbert White of Selborne" as a country minister followed truly in the way of the Man of Nazareth.

Beauty of Selborne

What might be said of Selborne could well be said of almost any country village. "The church and vicarage, with a few houses, lie embosomed among trees in the valley. Luxuriant beech-trees rise on the side of a steep hill, appearing to overhang the village, and go by the name of the 'Hanger.' This gives to the place a particular and striking beauty. . . . The parish was large, touching on twelve others. It was about fifty miles southwest of London. The village made one straggling street, nearly a mile long, in the valley. There were some seven hundred people in the village, a large hamlet, and on the neighboring farms; three hundred in the village and the rest elsewhere." For the rest, Selborne had a history as a Priory during mediaeval days.

Here White was born, lived and died. On his own confession it was "the wonders of Creation" that occupied him, "not the attainment of scientific knowledge" but "the pres-

ervation of a meek and quiet spirit." White was a Christian pastor, and he loved Nature for man's sake, and revealed her to him, that God might be "declared." Science was his way to worship.

That there is contained in, or rather *with, The Natural History of Selborne,* a series of letters called "The Antiquities of Selborne" is seldom known and little noted. Granted that this latter is the lesser portion of his famous work, it is still perhaps the first attempt at a scientific observation and analysis of human life, in the spirit of the present day Survey. It is pioneering. And while it is historical and antiquarian in tone, this was a necessary approach to an historical community like Selborne in a measure in which it would not be so of an American village.

Appreciation of Rural England

White's original and general purpose in all his work was to make a "Parochial History." He felt that if this were done here, and others could be induced to imitate, there would be the materials for real knowledge and understanding of rural England. Its originality—in his day—consisted in including natural history as well as the usual material of parish record, and in broadening the scope of these latter. Being a pioneer in this realm White doubtless tended to emphasize such aspects of his Survey as appealed to a naturalist.

Be this as it may, it was such work as his—for he was above all an enthusiast and inspirer of others—that has given to modern man a new heaven and a new earth. The Rev. Gilbert White pioneered the scientific study of a country community.

He was always concerned with the larger bearings of these his own local observations. In fact, his correspondence—which latterly was world-wide in scope arose out of his desire to acquaint himself with such. The study of petty local creeks, springs, and wells might not seem worth while, but White saw in such *his* opportunity for understanding of the world as a whole. He specially mentions the local "watershed" that sent streamlets on the way to different "seas." He reports on local soils, in minute detail, from talking with farmers and gardeners, but knows them to be portions of ancient and vast earth-processes. He writes often of single well-known landmark trees, in the neighborhood, but sees them as illustrations of the forest cover of England. Well-digging, road-building operations, and all quarries in the parish were constantly under his observation for fossils, and soil and geological formations. His letters show that he was concerned with the economics of these natural products, and their methods of extraction, preparation and use. He systematically recorded the rainfall.

One may well imagine what sermons on "God in Creation" he spoke to men at their work, and to many a housewife as he secured this information.

Wealth of Wonders

White knew the use of earthworms, and led Darwin to his great researches. Echoes in the valley led him to physical calculations and experiments—with the aid of his country folk, who "marveled" as they worked the magic of Nature. Of animals and birds he got many rare specimens "from the countrymen's museum"—the end of the barn, where it was his pastoral habit to look if perchance there might be any there nailed up. He "had eyes and saw" for he tells us that he was able to explain the presence of certain fish in a pond by noting that the cattle which came to stand in the water "in the heat of the day" were hosts to the flies which maintained the fish. "The fowl of the air" were an endless wonder to him. His letter describing the flight of different birds has no rival in literature except Victor Hugo's chapter on the Winds of Earth in *The Toilers of the Sea.*

Yet all such study had a human interest motive for White. He earnestly wished for more study of the insects about *the house and the fields.* The relation of deer in the forests nearby to the morals of the people and the use of those forests for soap-ashes and pasture concern him. He writes a very detailed account of "rush lights." The food habits of the poor, and changes in these, with their effect on health and skin diseases, the neglect of the grasses and other useful plants by botanists; these show the direction of his interest.

He searched the parish records back for sixty years for vital statistics. He found that baptisms exceeded burials by a third, and that the chance of life was forty-nine years. He found—by close observation on pastoral visitation—that the very poor are ever the worst economists. He records the story of an idiot boy who was "a genius with bees." He records rural superstitions. He pursued in detail the life-story of a long-lived hog (few of which he says are ever permitted by us to live out their full usefulness) and tells of its seventeen years and littering of three hundred pigs.

There is such a wealth of wonders in any parish in America!

—Reprinted from *Home Lands*

Convocation at Andover Newton

• Through the cooperation of the seminary administrators and members of the Town and Country Committee of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, a significant Convocation on the Church in Town and Country was held at Andover Newton Theological School last spring.

Taking as its general theme, "The Importance and Significance of the Rural Church in America," the conference was designed to bring to the students the challenge of service in the smaller community. Dr. Mark Rich, director of town and country work for the Northern Baptist Convention, addressed the group during the chapel hour on the theme, "The Function of the Church in the Rural Community."

A panel discussion and forum period followed, when students had an opportunity to ask many questions regarding rural church work.

In speaking of the significance of the Convocation, Dr. Harold W. Tribble, President of Andover Newton, stated: "The Convocation and conferences were stimulating and constructive. I think we are steadily moving forward in this phase of our work."

The Harvest Festival—A Statement

By the

COMMITTEE ON TOWN AND COUNTRY

• The celebration of "harvest home" is very old and has a place in the history of many peoples. The maturing harvest has inspired men to expressions of praise and thanksgiving which have found their way into the religious services of all lands and faiths. The great Hebrew festivals had agricultural associations. The Feast of Unleavened Bread in the "month of earing" celebrated the appearance of the ripening ears and the start of the barley harvest; the worshipper brought a shear of the new grain in consecration of the first-fruits. The Feast of Pentecost was the closing festivity of the seven weeks' joy of harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles in the time of the harvest moon was the crowning harvest festival, celebrating the ingathering of fruit, oil and wine.

Primitive folk festivals at harvest time combined with the Hebrew tradition under the auspices of the Christian Church to give England its joyous "Harvest Home" celebrations, Germany its "Erntedankfest" and Scotland its "Kirn." Pageantry, sports, singing, feasting and the comradeship of master, mistress and workers characterized these occasions and became the social and spiritual expressions of joy at the harvest's end. The Pilgrims kept their day of thanksgiving on the shores of New England with feasting and religious exercises.

Some Churches, like the Reformed, Lutheran, Mennonite, Moravian and Brethren, have continued to celebrate "harvest home," but in some other communions this practice has been all but abandoned, or the emphasis has been shifted to Thanksgiving Day in late autumn and the remembrance of national blessings, with but minor reference to the bounties of the harvest. This unfortunate trend has produced a nation of town and country churches in whose worship the references to seed-time and harvest are peculiarly lacking. No worship can, without losing vitality, remove itself from the ordinary pursuits of men. It is especially in connection with agriculture, where the mystery and providence of seed, soil and harvest are so evident, that this needs to be kept in mind.

The Harvest Festival may be held from August to November, but September and October are the most suitable months. It is best to keep it as a special day, apart from homecomings, anniversaries, rally days and annual meetings. Since decorations and offerings play such an important part in this festival, it must be held when suitable produce is available. The flowers, fruits, vegetables and other produce used as decorations and brought as thankofferings may be given to homes, hospitals and other charitable institutions, or they may be distributed among the sick and needy in the community. Cash offerings for missionary and charitable purposes may also be received at this time.

The annual Order of Service for a Harvest Festival is now ready for distribution. Designed for use by a congregation, it calls the attention of all communions, rural and urban alike, to the opportunities for religious experience and expression in services of thanksgiving and dedication at the harvest season. This year's leaflet was prepared for the Committee on Town and Country by the Rev. Ralph Grieser, minister of The Methodist Church, Colebrook, New Hampshire. It may be procured from your denominational home mission board or from the office of the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5c each; 100 copies, $1.00; 250 copies, $2.05; carriage extra on quantity orders.

Federated Churches

• Four sample "Useful Constitutions for Federated Churches," edited by Ralph L. Williamson, have been published in mimeographed form by the Rural Church Institute, Barnes Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y. This is Mimeograph Series No. 25, and may be procured from the Rural Church Institute for 10c.

Southern Baptist Rural Fields

• The Southern Baptists are setting up a rural church program that will assist rural churches within its denomination to secure model church buildings and pastors' homes, well-trained, full-time pastors, and trained leadership. "The goal is to revitalize the rural churches of the Southern Baptist Convention," according to S. F. Dowis in a recent article in *Southern Baptist Home Missions,* Atlanta, Ga.

Indiana Church Merger

• Indiana has had two instances of a Baptist and a Disciple church merging. The first one was in West Lafayette. The second was in Royal Center, where all property of the two churches was deeded to the new church, thereby forming a complete union.

Danes to Study Farming

• Twenty-five Danish agricultural students are on farms in various parts of the United States for a year's study of American agricultural methods.

They will spend three months on each of four different types of farms, including dairy and wheat acreages. Their visit is sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, the National Grange, the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Farmers' Union.

Pilgrim's Progress

• The Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. G. Ligutti, secretary of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, recently made a pilgrimage to Europe. His letters reveal many interesting items. Although space will not permit us to publish them in their entirety, we give you excerpts:

New York

CROP was awarded a certificate of merit for its good work by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. It's proven beyond doubt that decent people of different religious beliefs can get along amicably and can cooperate for the good of humanity.

Ireland

Fathers Hayes and Bergin met me at Shannon. They had waited from 11:30 to 4:00 P.M. Off we were in the rain, past lovely small farms, workers' cottages and curving roads sunken between edges! Past Limerick, the River Shannon, Tipperary town, with its old well full of legend and history, on towards the hills and wooded approaches to Bansha where Father Hayes is the pastor. He is proud of his remodeled church and presbytery, but prouder still of the Rural Industries Shop owned and operated by the people of Bansha.

An old mill was about to be torn down, young people were leaving the villages and farms. Father Hayes formed the parish council and out of their deliberations sprang Rural Industries for the processing of imported fruits into jellies, marmalades, etc.

Then a little work shop for young boys. Yes, so much can be done with so little on a community basis—vision, leadership, confidence in little people.

France

I got in Paris at 2:30 P.M. and Father Serve had set up a meeting for 3:30 at Rue du Bac. We met with rural leaders to talk over plans for the 1951 International Congress —the chaplains of the rural national organizations, and the two lay presidents, both young and alert. It is comforting to meet fellow workers in the fertile, rural-life field, and we must work with them to shape up a world-wide mentality. How much we can learn from each other!

Rome

Rome is the end of a journey just beginning. The Jura Mountains were last seen by me through a fast falling curtain of snow flakes. Thank God for the new combination of clouds with every sunrise!

Aside from some important conferences to arrange the work to come, my first two days in Rome were spent attending the Coltivation Diretti (owner-operator farmers) meeting—an honest-to-goodness grass roots farmers' organization. Every trace of fascism is gone. I watched for the slightest manifestation. I sought to evoke some sympathetic reactions—not a chance.

I hung around the halls, and was asked innumerable questions. I just love to converse with farmers—and they seemed so pleased to have a priest in their midst who talked their language and understood their problems. The last twenty-five years has brought about a change—they now talk of hybrid corn, artificial fertilizations, radios and pianos. Ownership and family operation of a farm builds up a character in the individual and a yeomanry in a state that are the foundation stones in a free society.

Hybrid-Seed-Corn

I was really touched by the Pope's interest in our hybrid corn gift, by His knowledge of CROP and His intense interest in the scientific field related to plant genetics. His Fatherly blessing descended upon our work as well as upon the corn.

The hybrid-seed-corn business is making the headlines all over Italy. I have had lots of fun—a round-table discussion on emigration—a most elite circolo discussion—almost frightening in personalities and names—and in an old historic hall a public lecture on "God helps those who help themselves." Really, the talk was on bringing philosophy and theology to the sidewalks and the stomachs.

Within a few years Italy can become self sufficient in corn production and may also produce hybrid seed for the rest of Europe. We are humbly proud that this year about 40,000 small farmers will plant a small portion of their holding with our hybrid seed corn—a gift from brother farmer to brother farmer for the good of brother man.

Since 1945 Italy has performed a transportation miracle. The production record is admirable but they still have to import raw materials and market most of their industrial products outside Italy. That is a problem.

The communist so-called co-ops are political and partisan and earn dividends for the hammer and sickle boys. The Confederazione is on the road to becoming a real Rochdale co-op. They still give credit, they still sell at a lower price, they still pay no dividends, they still do but little educational work. I spent an afternoon and evening with the chief officers—old friends and great co-operators. They poured out their souls to me. So few realize what co-ops are. They have to face competition from their best friends, suffer from the criticism of political-minded people, be accused of anti-clericalism when they try to maintain the co-op on a non-sectarian basis.

Practical Christianity

I am thoroughly convinced that a farm should be an economic unit in the midst of the economy where it exists—so should a parish or a diocese. That's why they came into existence, that's why they flourished. There is no use feeding hay to an elephant when it has expired.

I am looking over the land-economics situation as it exists—the land occupation by peasants—the reclamation by E.R.P. but I can see parishes, dioceses, priests and people at the same time. The material and the spiritual cannot be separated here on earth.

I stopped in at a D.P. camp this afternoon. We saw over 50 of them in 1948. They are more tragic today. At Aversa there are 1500 people crowded into one small unhealthy enclosure. Is there any hope? When?

And Congress wrangles about details. Some people complain about their jobs, housing and comforts!

I am glad to be in Rome this Holy Year. To me and for me it will always be a special year. Incidentally, the Catholic Church does not have secret designs on the world. It just battles along because of its deep convictions. I am glad I came to Rome as a pilgrim, if it were only to admire the devotion of fellow pilgrims. But this very enthusiasm may prove a handicap to Christianity if it fails to be practical—so said a young man. Another added that two pieces of wood can be used either as a barrier or as a leverage. How true! So can the cross!

"Case Studies of Family Farms"

• The Columbia University Seminar on Rural Life brings together "representatives of various fields of knowledge" who "examine, discuss, and analyze policy proposals that directly affect agriculture and rural life and indirectly influence the entire economic and social structure of the nation," states Professor Frank W. Cyr, chairman, in the introduction to the above title.

"In this process there is both direct consideration of policy formulation and further definition of research needed. It is believed that basic policy in any branch of government, economics, sociology, history, and education should be subjected to critical analysis by specialists in various related fields of knowledge."

The Seminar has given much attention to the family farm, and one of the publications, bearing the above title, consists of a summary of statements prepared by student members of the Seminar about 50 family farms known to the writers. The summary was prepared by Professor Edmund de S. Brunner. It tells an impressive story. A digest of the findings follows.

"All of these farms had been in the possession of the operators three or more generations. They were located in 24 states and 3 Canadian provinces. . . .

"This group of family farms over the generations has clearly achieved more than average success, measured in terms both of material prosperity and in terms of the quality of their life. Family feeling was very strong and also in most cases love of the land, their land.

"A majority of these families showed excellent leadership qualities in all generations, leadership which in some cases was exerted in the state and even the nation. They produced not only surplus food for the nation but children who entered socially useful occupations other than agriculture.

"In a few cases their very success lifted these farms out of the size and income range usually associated with family farms. This grew out of the high level of efficiency evident in a majority of all generations, an efficiency which touched every aspect of the operations from planting to harvesting to marketing.

"While two of the . . . operators and the children of several others are not currently much interested in agriculture or rural life and while several others have no heirs, it seems probable that four out of five of these 50 farms will remain in the family for another generation, which in some cases will be the sixth. One of these farms won the 1942 Gimbel award . . . but most of them were characterized by the same qualities, traits, practices, and values which brought this distinction to one."

Single copies of the report are free on application to Columbia University Seminar on Rural Life, Columbia University, New York 27, N. Y.

David W. Corson
from A. Devaney, N. Y.

A Platform for Decentralization

• The National Decentralist Institute believes that individual freedom, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution with its Bill of Rights, is the keystone of democracy, and that this freedom is in danger from conditions existing internally.

Historically, there has been a tendency to centralize. This centralization in its most acute form has resulted in fascism and state-socialism in European and Asiatic countries. There is real danger that it will happen here.

We are convinced that the only real safeguard against state-socialism is to decentralize, distribute and diffuse power among human beings generally.

Education

By our fruits—by the hearts and minds and behavior of the generation taught by current educational curricula—we stand condemned. It is men whom we have taught, whose behavior we have influenced, who have plunged the world into wars and revolutions and made the fair green earth an arena in which hate and murder and greed crucify Life and Love.

We conclude, therefore, that the way to a fullest realization of the blessings of freedom and an assurance of freedom's perpetuation is through a long-term national program of education and re-education.

Pointing the way toward this kind of education are already successful pioneer decentralist programs in various parts of the country.

Government

Government differs from all other man-made institutions because lawfully it possesses the power of coercion. It has used this power to expand its activities; to grant special privileges or benefits on a basis which lessens opportunity for individual freedom; and to impose taxes and create other restrictions which give it a dangerous and repressive measure of control over economic activity.

Such a concentration of power should be resisted. Only that which is beyond the capacity of the state or region should be attempted by national or international bodies.

We believe in incentive rather than punitive taxation. Government should not forcefully take from an individual his earned income; it should secure its proper revenue from the economic rent of land.

We believe that the individual should have equal opportunity of access to natural resources. This means not only the equal right to the use of land, but the opportunity to work.

We also believe that all legislation which permits the manipulation of standards of weight, measures or money should be abolished.

Economics

Hand in hand with ominously large government, other giants have appeared in our economic structure. Frequently monopolistic in character, they are being allowed to restrict the freedom of the individual in labor, finance, and industry. Such concentration of special privilege can be made to serve rather than to control the general welfare.

We consider that a wise and just land tenure system would greatly reduce the monopolistic nature of these huge aggregations of capital.

We believe in the fullest possible restoration of the free market. This involves the right of every person to equal access of land and to produce goods and offer services without undue interference by government, by institutions, or by other individuals.

We believe in the widest possible ownership of homes by individuals. Incentives and assistance for this purpose should be provided.

Agriculture

The farmer, as a separate, self-sufficient class, has all but disappeared from American life. This grandsire of all American industry, who constituted ninety per cent of our population one hundred years ago, now forms only twelve per cent of our population and has become completely mechanized and specialized in his operations. The nature of this crisis may be seen in some of the effects of current developments:

A. Increases in taxation are compelling farmers to put more emphasis on cash crops which will provide money with which to meet the tax bill.

B. Increasing regulation of agriculture by government has built up a bureaucracy and constantly reduces the range of individual freedom.

C. There is a steady increase in farm tenancy and in large-scale corporate farming. This process is helping to destroy rural community life.

D. There is a steady drift of the ablest young men and women from farm life with resulting impoverishment of the rural population.

We believe that these trends must be reversed. To that end we recommend the following:

A. A much larger percentage of the population should live in close association with the land. Decentralization of the industrial population would help accomplish this.

B. Education for living on the land is essential whether farmers or industrial workers are living in farm communities.

C. Permissive legislation should be passed to allow local or regional groups to organize for mutual benefit without depending on government.

D. Large scale commercial corporation farming should be discouraged, as should excessively large land holdings and tenant farming on land held for investment or speculation, and in its place a new land tenancy program leading to ownership should be created.

E. There should be general abandonment of government subsidies, floor and ceiling prices and crop restrictions.

F. Cooperatives should be encouraged. Voluntary mutual assistance should be used wherever feasible rather than dependence upon governmental aid.

— (From the minutes of a recent meeting of the National Decentralist Institute.)

New Visual Aids

Samson: A Picture Story from the d Testament, a new approach to Iblical teaching, prepared by Win- d P. Elson, consultant on visual ds in religious teaching, is being stributed to religious and educa- onal groups throughout the coun- by Young America Films, Inc., East 41st Street, New York 17, Y.

This filmstrip, picturing the story Samson, is accompanied by a read- g script in sermon from which in- oduces the significance of the story id its present-day application. Mr. lson has prepared a twelve-page tilization Manual which includes elpful background notes and bibli- graphy to enable the minister or lay ader to use the strip intelligently id to stimulate interest in further search in this pre-Christian period. This strip, issued by Young Amer- a Films, is one of a set of three hich brings to life the people of the enturies before Christ.

* * *

A series of three motion pictures, istoric in the sense that they repre- ent the first common endeavor by najor Protestant forces to enrich the urriculum of church schools with ilms, has been produced by the Prot- stant Film Commission in coopera- ion with the International Council f Religious Education. The series vill be distributed by the Religious Film Association, 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y.

The films are *Birthday Party, A Job for Bob* and *What Happened to Jo Jo. Birthday Party* was designed to aid teachers in developing in junior children an understanding of the Golden Rule in terms of every- day experiences; *A Job for Bob* is based on the International Council outline, "Choosing a Vocation." It is designed to help young people understand some of the Christian principles involved in selecting a vocation. *What Happened to Jo Jo* is based on the International Coun- cil's outline, "Christian Citizenship on the Local Level," and is intended to help young people consider and plan a course of action for commun- ty betterment.

Into the Good Ground was produced under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education. Designed to bring about a better understanding of the Bible, the film has a "built-in" discussion guide which makes clear the purposes of the film and significant points to be observed. *Into the Good Ground* is being distributed through The Religious Film Association, 45 Astor Place, New York, and is available not only from RFA libraries but from many independent film libraries throughout the country. It runs approximately thirty minutes and rents for $10.00.

* * *

Out of the Dust, a dramatic motion picture on missions in Latin America, is without denominational content although it was financed by the Northern Baptist Convention. Distributed by The Religious Film Association, the film runs approximately forty-five minutes and rents for $10.00.

* * *

The first professionally made motion picture on the Near East has just been released through The Religious Film Association. Entitled *South of the Clouds,* the film was made by the Protestant Film Commission, at the request of the denominational mission boards working through the Missionary Education Movement as an aid to the Protestant churches' 1950-51 mission study emphasis on the Near East.

South of the Clouds tells the story of two girls who become roommates at a Christian college for women in Beirut, Lebanon. Najla, beautiful daughter of an aristocratic Moslem family, because of the sheltered life she has led, is at first disdainful of what she deems to be the crudities of the democratic life fostered by the college. Through her associations with Suad, attractive natural leader born of an impoverished Christian family, and through the school program which includes a ministry to the sick and needy, Majla catches a vision of a new way of life and prepares to make a genuine contribution to her country and her people. The film runs thirty-five minutes and rents for $8.00.

Nu-Art Films, 112 West 48th Street, New York 19, N. Y., has available, among others, the following films:

The Psalm of Psalms. Here, pastoral views of the Holy Land present an impressive picturization of the 23rd Psalm, renowned in Biblical poetry. The film is enhanced by beautiful organ background music. 1 Reel, 16 MM, Sound, Sale: $36.00; Rental, $2.00. 16 MM Silent: Sale, $24.00; Rental, $1.50.

Psalmody is a devotional pæan of praise. The beauty of the world's natural resources is coupled with the wisdom of ecclesiastical narration. 1 Reel, 16 MM Sound only. Sale: $36.00; Rental Rate, $2.00 per day. Also available in Kodachrome, $90.00; Rental Rate, $4.00 per day.

* * *

The Religious Film Association has issued a new *Catalogue of Films for Church and Community Use.* Besides the film descriptions, the Catalogue includes a listing of resource materials for leaders, articles on methods of film presentation, and a list of films for special occasions. The Religious Film Association *Catalogue of Films for Church and Community Use* may be procured from the RFA, 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y., for 50 cents.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Program

NATIONAL CONVOCATION

on THE CHURCH IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

Under the Auspices of the Committee on Town and Country, Home Missions Council of North America, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and the International Council of Religious Education, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

This is your invitation to attend—but you should read instructions.

Columbia, Missouri, November 7-9, 1950

General Information

WHO MAY ATTEND? You! if you are interested in the Town and Country Church. Ministers, ministers' wives, lay people, administrators of the church, religious educators, editors, officers of farm and rural community organizations, employees of civic and government agencies—all are invited.

ROOMS will be provided in homes through the cooperation of the church people of Columbia at prevailing tourist rates. *Please make applications in advance,* mailing this to Professor Vladimir E. Hartman, Bible College of Missouri, Columbia, Mo. The Bible College cannot be responsible for any requests received later than October 27, 1950.

FOR ASSIGNMENT to a room, report immediately upon arrival to

MISSOURI METHODIST CHURCH
9th and Locust Street
Columbia, Missouri

An attendant will be at the registration desk on Monday, November 6, from 5:00 to 6:00 P.M. and 7:30 to 9:30 P.M. Tuesday, the registration will begin at 8:00 A.M. and continue through the Convocation sessions.

TO HELP carry the expense of the Convocation, a registration fee of $1.00 will be charged at the Convocation.

Outline of Program

HEADQUARTERS: Missouri Methodist Church, 9th and Locust Street. All sessions will be held in this church.

REGISTRATION: Monday, 5:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.—Church. Monday, 7:30 P.M. to 9:30 P.M.—Church.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7

8:00 A.M.—*Registration*

9:15 A.M.—*Opening General Session*
"The Town and Country Church and This Convocation"
Claude J. Snyder, Chairman of the Committee on Town and Country
"Welcome to Columbia"
Seth W. Slaughter, Dean of Bible College

9:30 A.M.—"Some Rural Situations and the Responsibilities of Rural Churches"
Carl C. Taylor, U.S. Department of Agriculture

10:15 A.M.—*Worship Service*
Ray F. Magnuson, Nebraska Methodist Conference

10:45 A.M.—*Commissions Meet* (see list)

LUNCH

2:00 P.M.—*General Session*
"This is How We Did It"
Clyde Leeds, Garden City, Minnesota
"The World Food Situation"
Raymond W. Miller, Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N.

3:30 P.M.—*Commissions Meet* (see list)

DINNER

7:30 P.M.—*General Session*
"Worship Methods in the Rural Church"
Edward K. Ziegler, Church of the Brethren, Bridgewater, Va.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

8:30 A.M.—*Worship Service*
Ray F. Magnuson, Nebraska Methodist Conference

9:15 A.M.—*General Session*
"This is How We Did It"
Margaret Blair Johnstone, Essex Larger Parish, N. Y.
"How Can We Make A Rural Church and Community Study?"
Don F. Pielstick, Home Missions Council

10:00 A.M.—*Commissions Meet* (see list)

LUNCH

1:30 P.M.—*General Session*
"This Is How We Did It"
Elizabeth Thompson, Board of Missions, Methodist Church, Shreveport, La.
"The Educational Processes of Cooperatives in Relation to Rural Life"
Carl Hutchinson, Ohio Farm Bureau

3:00 P.M.—*Denominational Meetings,* as arranged by officers of the denominations

DINNER

:00 P.M.—*General Session*
"Protestant Contributions to Democracy Through Local Group Action"
Victor Obenhaus, Chicago Theological Seminary

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9

:00 A.M.—*Panel Summary of Commission Reports*
:00 A.M.—*Final General Session*
"How Can the City and the Country Church Work Together?"
C. Morton Hanna, Louisville Theological Seminary
:00 M.—*Worship Service*
Ray F. Magnuson, Nebraska Methodist Conference
2:30 P.M.—*Adjournment*

Commissions

OR THE NATIONAL CONVOCATION ON THE CHURCH IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

ach Commission will meet at 10:45 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. on November 7, 1950; also at 10:00 A.M., November 8. ach Commission will consist of an interested group of people who will think together for the purpose of formulating recommendations as to future program emphases for the rural church—national, state and local, *especially local.* All attending the Convocation are invited to participate in the Commission meetings.

1. The Church and Farm Policy.
   Thomas Alfred Tripp, Congregational Christian Church.
2. The Rural Church and the Family Farm.
   Joseph Ackerman, Farm Foundation.
3. The Rural Church and the Migrant Laborer and Sharecropper.
   Ellis Marshburn, Home Missions Council.
4. The Rural Church and Community Agencies.
   James D. Wyker, CROP.
5. Church Cooperation in the Rural Community.
   Ralph L. Williamson, Rural Church Institute.
6. The Agricultural College and the Rural Pastors Institute.
   William G. Mather, Pennsylvania State College.
7. The Rural Pastor as a Counselor of Individuals.
   Chairman to be announced.
8. The Christian Teaching Mission and the Rural Church.
   Harry Kalas, International Council of Religious Education.
9. Religious Education.
   John B. Ketcham, International Council of Religious Education.
10. Lay Participation in the Rural Church.
    C. E. Lively, University of Missouri.
11. The Rural Church and Minority Peoples.
    Edgar A. Love, the Methodist Church.
12. Worship in the Rural Church.
    Deane Edwards, Federal Council of Churches.
13. Task of the Town Church.
    Glenn F. Sanford, the Methodist Church.
14. Inter-relations of City and Country Churches.
    C. Morton Hanna, Louisville Theological Seminary.
15. Study of the Rural Church Situation in Three Midwest Counties.
    Lawrence Heppel, University of Missouri.
16. The Minister and the Productive Homestead.
    Russell Hoy, Methodist Church, Coshocton, Ohio.
17. Ministers' Salaries.
    Chairman to be announced.
18. The United Church Canvass in Rural Communities.
    C. Carson Bransby, Presbyterian Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa.
19. The Church in Rural Mining Communities.
    Chairman to be announced.

Grandma Moses' Paintings in Europe

Some sixty of Grandma Moses' rural life primitives were sent to Europe this summer for exhibition in Vienna, the Hague, Berne, and Paris. The European critics were favorable in their comments. Mrs. Moses, of Eagle Bridge, N. Y., did not go to Europe, but she could have if she had wished to go, she told inquirers.

Degree for Reisner

At the Yale University commencement, an honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred on John H. Reisner, Yale, 1911, now secretary of Agricultural Missions, Inc.

Introducing Mr. Reisner, Professor Bellinger said:

"It was while he was an undergraduate that John Reisner decided to be a missionary and to devote his life to the assistance of the vast majority of mankind which is closest to the soil and upon which the subsistence of the human race depends. Fortified by a graduate degree of agriculture from Cornell, he went to China in 1914 to join the faculty of the infant College of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Nanking. He rose to be its Dean, and Director of the associated Agricultural Experiment Station. Important as this work became it was not broad enough to satisfy his vision. He returned to America in 1931 to organize Agricultural Missions, Incorporated, and through its agency to offer the help of enlightened Christian interest to the poverty of the rural millions throughout the world. He is one who has read with understanding the parable of the seed which fell on good ground."

Conferring the degree, President Seymour said:

"Selfless servant of the needy, your alma mater confers upon you the degree of Master of Arts and admits you to all its rights and privileges."

The Organic Farming Improvement

(AN INTERVIEW WITH J. I. RODALE)

• "I became interested in the organic farming and gardening methods by reading the writings of Sir Albert Howard, the Englishman who learned from the farmers of Indore, India," said J. I. Rodale, founder of *Organic Gardening,* the *Organic Farmer,* and *Prevention,* three magazines published at Emmaus, Pa., when I called on him recently. My birthplace is near Emmaus, and I had lived in that vicinity the first twenty years of my life. It was a Moravian settlement.

I talked with Mr. Rodale, after he had spent a day at his office. He is an electrical manufacturer who also works on his magazines and owns an experimental farm that I have seen several times.

Organic Matter

Mr. Rodale has become convinced that "organic matter is the answer." By organic matter is meant not only compost of vegetable growth and manure, but also the slow-acting ground rocks. Ground phosphate rock and potash are becoming available. They are "mild" compared with commercial fertilizers containing acids.

Having made a speech the previous day where the acoustics were poor, Mr. Rodale's voice had failed him and his physician had asked him not to speak to anybody. I arrived on schedule at 6:00 P.M. and began to talk with his son, Robert, who edits the *Organic Farmer.* Soon a mysterious force restored Mr. Rodale's voice. I am sure that Mr. Rodale's deep interest in his enterprises was operating to overcome the handicap.

I had followed the magazine *Organic Gardening* for some years. During the past few months, J. I. Rodale had been describing the method of "sheet composting," whereby organic matter is worked into soil from thin layers, as compared with the older and better known way of making humus in compost piles or pits. Composting is, of course, not new. Many people in the world have practiced it. The particular methods of sheet composting described in *Organic Gardening* from December, 1949, on are new.

Gardener and Farmer

One of the significant aspects of these developments is that they offer new possibilities to the farmer who operates a farm for a living. I had heard it said that the making of compost in piles and pits is all right for gardeners, but it takes too much time or money to turn large quantities of organic matter into humus for use on the land of the commercial farmer.

Through sheet composting, Mr. Rodale believes, the average family farmer can turn his own organic materials, plus a small amount of material which he must buy, into plant food so that a good agriculture will result. Many combinations of organic materials are possible in sheet composting. Several are now being tried on the Rodale experimental farm at Emmaus.

Mr. Rodale is particularly pleased with analyses of wheat he has grown by the organic methods. He told me independent tests showed that this wheat had much higher vitamin and mineral content than that grown with the conventional methods.

Organic Gardening, a monthly, now has about 95,000 subscribers at $3.00 a year. The *Organic Farmer* has 22,000 at $3.00 a year (this is for the family farmer who sells products for a living). The new magazine, *Prevention,* which stresses the health aspect of the organic methods, already has 4,000 subscribers. A list of pamphlets and books is published in each issue of *Organic Gardening.*

There is also a Soil and Health Foundation, with headquarters in Emmaus, which maintains a laboratory and makes modest grants for scientific experiments. It plans to make grants in aid of a variety of scientific projects, particularly those that can be carried on by members of faculties of the agricultural colleges.

New Interest

Mr. Rodale pointed to many indications of new interest in organic methods compared with the situation ten years ago when *Organic Gardening* was established. At the big New York flower show this year, ten exhibitors labeled their products "organic," something unprecedented in the show. Several state colleges are taking an interest, instead of showing a "hands-off" attitude.

My final question was, "Do church people come to the experimental farm and show an interest in the whole movement?" The answer was: "Only a few." I myself had met two Roman Catholic priests during a short visit in 1948. Mr. Rodale speaks about the movement before various groups and lately he heard about one minister who spoke about organic methods.

Mr. Rodale has personal convictions that express his whole being on the ethical and spiritual aspects of this movement. He believes that he is pleading for a natural order whereby the bounty of the earth should be called out for all the children of men. He is opposed to "artificial attempts" to do away with labor, and to produce the food and fiber for the race. He believes he is promoting more than techniques of production—he is advocating forces that make for the health of the whole man in the broadest sense. And that includes man's spiritual health, I concluded as I left this interesting man, hoping that his voice had not been injured by the aid he gave me.

—BENSON Y. LANDIS

Methodist Women in the Countryside

• "Yes, Methodist women are advancing the work of the kingdom of God in the countryside." Many instances of their work were portrayed in the April issue of *The Methodist Woman,* Cincinnati, Ohio, by the rural workers, themselves: work with migrants; work done by the MacDonell Methodist Center in Louisiana; work in Florida; work in Pennsylvania and in Tennessee.

Book Reviews

ural Prospect. By Mark Rich. Friendship Press, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 1950. $1.50.

This is the Home Missions study extbook for the coming season. It is he author's first book, and it should ot be his last.

Knowing Mark Rich, this reviewer ad no question as to the spiritual ualities of his forthcoming book ut he asked himself whether the ook would be sociological enough, r whether it would be too sociological, for these are questions about which ministers have taken opposite iews concerning earlier books on he rural church.

Now that I have read *Rural Prospect,* I am amazed at the skillful blending of factual material into a rapidly moving account of rural church work. There has been no other job of writing like it. The book is condensed, direct, concise, vivid. Working under the restrictions imposed by the requirements of the publishers, Rich has produced an outstanding book.

The book will not have the approval of everyone, for it boldly claims that genuine ecumenicity is good New Testament religion. It places the community above denominations, people above structure. It seeks to claim all of the life of the community for Christianity.

Rural Prospect sees the future as rich, glorious, full of promise. It is evangelistic, warm-hearted. It is first of all a religious book, then sociological. —Ralph Williamson

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Small Town Renaissance. A Story of the Montana Study. By Richard Waverly Poston. Harper and Bros., New York. 1950. $3.00.

"Technology has given us the tools to meet the needs of all humanity, but it has given human beings neither the disposition toward each other, nor the social direction by which these goals can be reached. We have given nurture to a science which has remade the productive world, but we have not equipped men to live in that world. We have given wings to the mind of man without putting beauty and love in his heart." So spoke Ernest O. Melby, chancellor of the University of Montana, and as chancellor he intended to do something about it. *Small Town Renaissance* is the story of how his intentions were brought to fruition. The literature developed in the Montana Study is being used today in twelve other states and five foreign countries.

Many citizens of democratic nations are putting themselves in a precarious position by concentrating all of their attention upon communism, thus leaving little time or energy for the practice of Democracy. It is refreshing, therefore, to read about citizens who have set out to enlighten themselves about the local community situation with the intention of making it a better place for free people to live in.

Lonepine was a "general store" community two miles off the pavement. The greatest asset of the citizenry was a carry-over from their homesteading forefathers of a love for the place and the intention to make it a respectable place to call home. The minister shared their feelings. Hearing of the Montana Study he thought a Lonepine Study Group might help. They met once a week for ten weeks and seldom disbanded before midnight. The interest thus stimulated resulted in a public library, and a series of historical plays written and produced by sixty Lonepine people. For two successive nights the Community Hall was filled to capacity to view the productions. $1,100 in receipts helped to provide improvements and to get a recreational program started.

There was Darby, a logged-out lumber town, where "so many people of divergent opinions working together for the success of a difficult common project had given their community a new spirit of unity." And Stevensville, where White and Indian relations had not always been good but the "white men and red men had been courageous enough to re-enact the unvarnished truth of their own bitter experience, and between them they had created a new level of tolerance.

"The techniques of The Montana Study are a means through which education can help orient men and women toward the family and the small community and, without undue interference with a normal shift in population, can help young people to appreciate and feel responsible for their home communities instead of trying to escape from them."

—Don F. Pielstick

United Evangelistic Advance

• In a Congregational church in Farmington, Maine, a new member remarked recently, "I would have joined this church twenty years ago if someone had asked me."

This statement typifies the midpoint of the current United Evangelistic Advance—concerted effort of thirty-eight denominations to win America for Christ, in a fifteen-month campaign.

Reports of the progress made since the Evangelistic Advance began have come to Dr. Jesse M. Bader, secretary of the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of Churches, from many of the sixty-five secretaries of evangelism cooperating in the Advance. The Advance will continue through December.

In this same Maine Congregational church of 333 members, a group of trained laymen this year won 72 members in four evenings.

In Bradford, Vermont, a small community of 1,500, 61 new church members were received in four evenings, and in Dallas, Texas, 19 churches added 1,457 new members in one week of visitation evangelism.

The United Evangelistic Advance committee represents almost all major Protestant denominations in the United States. It is making a significant contribution to the program of evangelism in the rural church. The high points of the Advance calendar are:

October 1—World Communion Sunday

October 29-November 5—Simultaneous preaching missions in all Protestant churches

December 3-7—Visitation Evangelism in every local church

A Message to the Friends of the Man With the Hoe, from the Height of Eighty Years

Staten Island, N. Y.
Feb. 12, 1933

• Thirty-five years ago I wrote "The Man With the Hoe." It was born out of the anguish of my compassion and out of the fire of my indignation.

The poem sprung from my long purpose to speak a word for the humiliated and the wronged. I have borne my witness: it is said: it is truth: let it stand. Now I am eighty-one years, and this poem is still my soul's word against the degradation of labor, the oppression of man by man.

Since that early hour when I wrote the Hoe-poem, the world has been shaken by revolutions. The whirlwinds of rebellion that were predicted have rushed down upon mankind. We have the tragic spectacle of Russia, Spain, Mexico, China, India. My poetic prophecy has been fulfilled.

Yes, in all lands, including our own America, there has gone forward a radical change in the earth-hold of the tillers of the soil. They are now being dispossessed and disinherited. Their throats have felt the clutch of the mortgage—literally, the death clutch.

My hoe-man is not the intelligent and prosperous farmer, for the hoe-man is at the bottom of the labor pyramid. He is betrayed humanity, the toiler ground down through ages of social injustice. He is the Shrunken by the special privileges conferred upon the Few. His plight is worse than ever before, because of the foolish permission we have given to the Few to own the things which should be the common possession of the people. This withdrawal should be in the interests of the primary rectitudes—in the interests of justice and brotherhood.

If ever the lowly are lifted, it will be by the concerted action of the men of power in all walks of life—by the men of goodwill—by the men who carry the Christ purpose in the heart. We must organize what may be called a Kingdom of Comrades, a great social brotherhood, which was the ever-present dream of the social Christ.

From the height of eighty years, I hail you, friends of the hoe-man; and my spirit will ever join your spirits in the battle for human rights.

(signed) EDWIN MARKHAM

(The foregoing document, in the hand of the noted author, appears framed on the walls of the seminar room of Charles M. McConnell, Boston University School of Theology.)

A Prayer For the Church in the Country*

• Our hearts are glad, O God, that Thou hast not reserved Thy gospel for the mighty or the learned or those renowned in the courts of men. As we remember our Lord Jesus, we rejoice that he loved the common people and that the common people heard him gladly.

Impart Thy spirit, O Lord, to country churches throughout the earth. In their keeping are the destinies of nations; for only as the souls of country folk are strong shall their best gifts be made to the nourishing of the world.

Help those who till the land to see it as a trust from Thee. Inspire them with the joy of partnership with Thee in giving to men their daily bread. Open their eyes to the beauty amid which they dwell. Make them strong in a great tradition rooted in the earth, and help them to cast off bondage to old ways which erect barriers to the new.

Impart to country ministers a sense of the high challenge of their task. Sustain them when material resources are scant and words of appreciation few; save them from self-pity and discouragement. Give them vision to see the riches hid in the land and in those that dwell upon it. Then as they minister in Christ's name, may they leave with Thee the outcome, rejoicing to have some share in Thy service. *Amen.*

* From *The Glory of God* by Georgia Harkness, published by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. Used by permission.

The Church and Agriculture

• A recent issue of *Presbyterian Survey*, Richmond, Va., presented an article by W. A. Minor, Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which depicted the needs of rural people and the rural church's role in meeting these needs.

Secretary Brannan was quoted in this article as saying, "Farm families, all of them, are our most valuable agricultural resource and certainly one of our most valuable national resources. Farmers have legitimate aspirations to win for themselves and their children as high a standard of living as that enjoyed by any of our citizens. In a democracy we must consider the aspirations of all our people, not just those of the fortunate few."

Mr. Minor goes on to say that "without prosperous farmers, America cannot have continued prosperity for the non-farm population," and that the church's first responsibility is to "develop hope and provide inspiration and self respect," for we can "rarely attain objectives or goals higher than those we seek."

Mexican Agricultural Program

• An attractive brochure, entitled "Mexican Agricultural Program," has been published this year by The Rockefeller Foundation, N. Y.

This story of a project in international cooperation was written by J. G. Harrar. It is a review of the first six years of activity under the joint auspices of the Mexican Government and The Rockefeller Foundation to improve the productivity of Mexico's agriculture.

During the six-year period, The Rockefeller Foundation has allocated about $1,300,000 to the program. The Mexican Government's direct subsidy for general program activity has amounted to 930,000 pesos; in addition Mexico has provided land, labor, office and laboratory space, funds for buildings, machinery, fertilizers and other materials, and has commissioned technical personnel to the program.

This fascinating story is interspersed with many telling photographs and drawings.